

9. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of facilitating inspection includes opening an access gate, viewing the customer through an on-site camera as the customer approaches the recommended self-storage unit, and opening the recommended self-storage unit so that the customer can inspect the unit.

10. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of establishing a rental agreement further comprises the step of:

directing the customer to fill out a rental agreement form identifying a self-storage unit selected for rental by inserting personal information about the customer, and indicating a method of payment.

11. A method for renting a self-storage unit located at a self-storage rental unit facility, said method comprising the steps of:

automatically telephoning a remote manager when a customer enters a customer service area at the self-storage unit facility so as to enable the customer and remote manager to communicate using a communication link;

establishing the storage needs of the customer;

selecting one or more self-storage units at said facility that can accommodate the customer's storage needs;

communicating to the customer said one or more self-storage units that can accommodate the storage needs to the customer;

opening an access gate to said one or more self-storage units;

viewing the customer as the customer approaches said one or more self-storage units;

opening at least one of said self-storage units so that the customer can inspect said at least one self-storage unit; and

establishing a self storage rental agreement between the customer and the self-storage facility under the guidance of the remote manager.

12. A system for renting a self-storage unit located at a self-storage unit facility, said system comprising:

means for establishing contact with a remote manager when a customer enters a customer service area proximate said self-storage facility so as to enable the customer and the remote manager to communicate using a communication link;

means for recommending to the customer a self-storage unit adequate to meet the customer's needs;

means for allowing the customer to inspect the recommended self-storage unit;
and

means for establishing a self storage rental agreement between the customer and the self-storage facility.

13. The system of claim 11 wherein the means for establishing contact further comprises a telephone connection between the customer and the manager.

14. The system of claim 11 wherein the communication link comprises at least one of a telephone, Internet, radio, cellular, satellite, cable, facsimile, email, web and video connection.

15. The system of claim 11 wherein the means for recommending a self-storage unit further comprises a telephone connection for communicating the self-storage unit.

16. The system of claim 11 wherein the means for allowing the customer further comprises a gate access controller interfaced to a telephone network.

17. The system of claim 11 wherein the means for establishing a self storage rental agreement further comprises a rental agreement drop box for depositing completed rental agreement forms.

18. A system for renting a self-storage unit comprising:
means for automatically telephoning a remote manager when a customer enters a customer service area of a self-storage facility wherein the customer and manager communicate using a communication link;

means for determining the storage needs of the customer

means for selecting a self-storage unit that can accommodate the customer's storage needs;

means for communicating a selected self-storage unit to the customer;

means for opening an access gate;

means for viewing the customer through at least one camera as the customer approaches the selected self-storage unit;

means for opening the selected self-storage unit so that the customer can inspect the communicated self-storage unit; and

means for establishing a self storage rental agreement between the customer and the self-storage facility.

19. The system of claim 17 wherein the communication link comprises at least one of a telephone, Internet, radio, cellular, satellite, cable, facsimile, email, web and video connection.

20. The system of claim 17 wherein the means for finding a self-storage unit further comprises a database search for at least one available self-storage unit.

21. The system of claim 17 wherein the means for opening an access gate further comprises sending signal to a gate access controller interfaced to a telephone network.

22. The system of claim 17 wherein the means for establishing a self storage rental agreement further comprises a rental agreement drop box for depositing completed rental agreement forms.

23. A system for renting a self-storage unit comprising:

a customer service site comprising an audio visual communication system for establishing communication between a manager and a customer of a self storage business; and

a gate access controller for allowing the customer entrance to a self-storage unit comprising at least one self-storage unit.